

REMARKS

Claims 30 and 32-53 remain in this application. No claims have been added, cancelled, or amended. The Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. The remarks below discuss the present claims in view of the previous rejections.

35 U.S.C. §103(a) Rejection – EP 102270 in view of Dukovic

The Examiner has previously rejected claims 30-32, 34, 35, 39-43, 45, 46, 48, 50 and 51 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over European Patent No. 1022770 (hereinafter referred to as “EP 102270”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,471,845 issued to Dukovic et al. (hereinafter “Dukovic”). Applicants respectfully submit that EP 1022770 and Dukovic should not be combined in the manner proposed by the Examiner.

Claim 30 recites a method comprising “*storing for at least two days a solution containing a subset of a group consisting of a metal ion, a complexing agent, an ammonium salt, and a strong base, wherein the subset includes at least two components of the group; and nearer to a time of use in an electroless deposition process, using the solution to form a second electroless deposition solution containing the entire group*”.

As previously argued, EP 1022770 does not teach or suggest storing the claimed solution, let alone storing the claimed solution for at least two days. The Examiner appears to have agreed inasmuch as he has stated “*EP1022770 fails to teach storing of the above first solution for at least two days*”.

The Examiner has then argued that it would have been obvious “*to have stored the components of the electroless plating solution of EP 1022770 for at least two days*

since Dukovic et al. disclose that additives of a plating solution may be stored for at least three days before being mixed together to form a plating solution".

Applicants respectfully disagree. Dukovic discusses storing **additives A, B, and C** in bottles. See e.g., column 8, lines 34-35. As understood by Applicants, Dukovic does not teach or suggest that the additives may include **mixtures**. In any event, Dukovic absolutely does not teach or suggest that one of the additives may be the claimed subset of components recited in claim 30. Dukovic explicitly discloses that the fresh plating solution is **not** stored. Rather, as shown in Figure 1, the fresh plating solution is provided through bulk deliver lines and via pneumatic valve 26FB and flow gage 28FB. See also e.g., column 8, lines 33-34. Additionally, the fresh plating solution appears to be complete/intact except for the additives. **This teaches away from the Examiner's proposal to stop preparing the plating solution of EP 1022770 before completion and store one of the intermediate solutions for two days, since Dukovic discloses that the complete/intact fresh plating solution is provided without storage.** Accordingly, EP 1022770 and Dukovic should not be combined and it is simply inappropriate to combine these references in a way in which the intermediate solutions of EP 1022770 are stored for at least two days.

For at least these reasons, claim 30 and its dependent claims are believed to be allowable. Independent claim 45 and its dependent claims are believed to be allowable for similar reasons. Independent claim 48 and its dependent claims are also believed to be allowable.

35 U.S.C. §103(a) Rejection – Chebiam and Dukovic

The Examiner has rejected claims 30-32, 40-42, 45, 46, 48, 50 and 51 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application No. 2003/0113576 issued to Chebiam et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Chebiam") in view of Dukovic. Applicants respectfully

submit that Chebiam and Dukovic should not be combined in the manner proposed by the Examiner for reasons similar to those discussed above.

For at least these reasons, claim 30 and its dependent claims are believed to be allowable. Independent claim 45 and its dependent claims are believed to be allowable for similar reasons. Independent claim 48 and its dependent claims are also believed to be allowable.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all claims now pending patentably define the subject invention over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request that the rejections be withdrawn and the claims be allowed at the earliest possible date.

Request For Telephone Interview

The Examiner is invited to call Brent E. Vecchia at (303) 740-1980 if there remains any issue with allowance of the case.

Request For An Extension Of Time

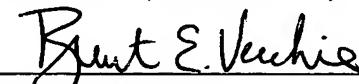
The Applicants respectfully petition for an extension of time to respond to the outstanding Office Action pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) should one be necessary. Please charge our Deposit Account No. 02-2666 to cover the necessary fee under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17 for such an extension.

Charge Our Deposit Account

Please charge any shortage to our Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,
BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN LLP

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Brent E. Vecchia
Brent E. Vecchia
Reg. No. 48,011

12400 Wilshire Boulevard
Seventh Floor
Los Angeles, California 90025-1030
(303) 740-1980